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STANFORD UNIVERSITY
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Final Report On

INVESTIGATION OF HALO SATELLITE ORBIT CONTROL

Principal Investigator

Professor John V. Breakwell

Guidance and Control Laboratory

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INVESTIGATION OF HALO SATELLITE ORBIT CONTROL

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It is desired to maintain the communication station in a "Halo" orbit near the translunar libration point L_2 of the Earth-Moon system. Such a Halo orbit is to be "visible" at all times from Earth, and (except for perturbations due to solar gravity and mean Earth-Moon orbital eccentricity) is to be a possible periodic orbit for an unpowered vehicle. A one-parameter family of such periodic orbits, which are all unstable, has previously been computed analytically by a truncated Linstedt method [Ref. 1], and is shown in Fig. 1.

The accuracy of the truncated analytic description of a typical "nominal" Halo orbit is limited, leading to an acceleration error averaging about 10^{-6} g's, this being therefore the "cost" of a very tight control to the nominal path.

Since a looser control would be quite satisfactory, the station-keeping problem is posed in the following way:

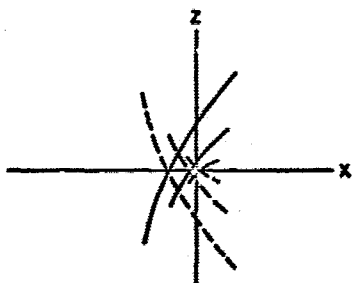
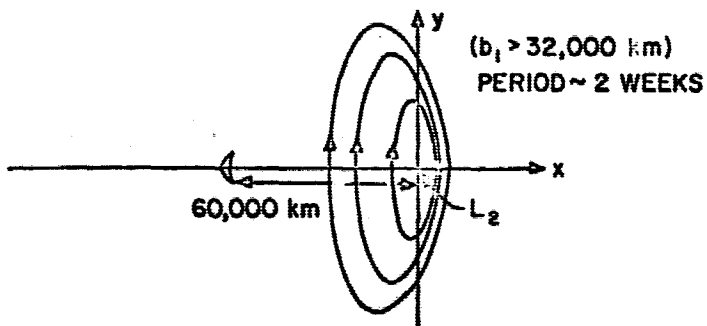
$$\text{given } \dot{\mathbf{x}} = \underset{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{PERIODIC}}}{\mathbf{F}(\mathbf{t})\mathbf{x}} + \underset{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{PERIODIC}}}{\begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ \mathbf{e}(\mathbf{t}) \end{pmatrix}} + \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ \mathbf{u} \end{pmatrix},$$

where

$$\mathbf{x} = \begin{pmatrix} \delta \mathbf{r} \\ \dot{\delta \mathbf{r}} \end{pmatrix},$$

$\delta \mathbf{r}$ is the deviation from the nominal path, $\mathbf{e}(\mathbf{t})$ is the known acceleration error along the nominal path, and \mathbf{u} is the control acceleration; find $\mathbf{u}(\mathbf{t})$ to minimize

$$\lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \int_0^T \left\{ |\dot{\mathbf{u}}(\mathbf{t})|^2 + k |\delta \mathbf{r}(\mathbf{t})|^2 \right\} d\mathbf{t},$$



VIEW FROM EARTH

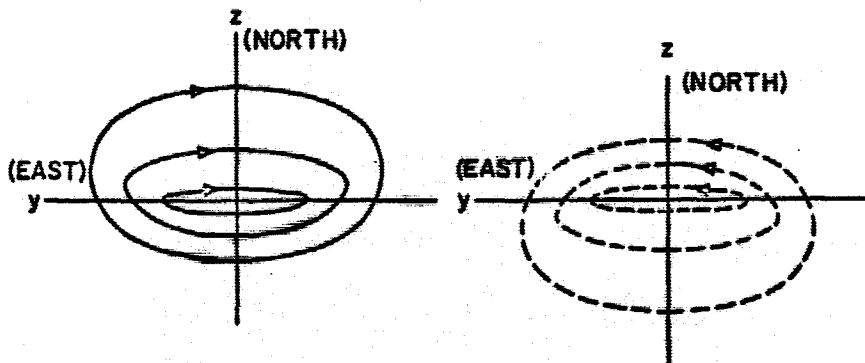


FIG. 1 HALO ORBITS

where the positive scalar k is a measure of the tightness of the desired control. The optimal three-axis control \vec{u} takes the form

$$\vec{u} = -C(t)x - \vec{b}(t),$$

where $C(t)$, $\vec{b}(t)$ are periodic quantities, dependent on k , and computable with the aid of "spectral factorization" [2]. The resulting rms $|\delta r|$ and $|\vec{u}|$ are plotted in Fig. 2, for single-axis as well as 3-axis control, together with an "error settling time" (= time for initial $|\delta r_0|$ to decrease by a factor 10) which, like the rms $|\delta r|$, increases as k decreases. The squares in Fig. 2 indicate that the average control can be reduced to less than 10^{-7} g's with an error settling time of less than three months.

More important, the resulting limiting motion in the 3-axis control case provides an improved nominal, correctable as in Ref. 1 for the non-commensurable perturbations, which permit an average control of only 10^{-8} g's with much tighter control, corresponding to settling times of the order of 1 day.

Lastly, the station-keeping cost will be slightly increased by imperfect knowledge of the state x . If it is assumed that a continuous control \vec{u} is accompanied by a small random acceleration error of known statistics, and that observation errors have known statistics, the control law must make use of a Kalman estimator

$$\dot{\hat{x}} = F(t)\hat{x} + \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ \vec{e}(t) + \vec{u} \end{bmatrix} + \frac{6 \times m}{K(t)} \begin{bmatrix} m \times 1 \\ z - H(t)\hat{x} \end{bmatrix},$$

z being the usual linearized measurement vector, and, if $H(t)$ is periodic, $K(t)$ approaches a computable periodic gain matrix as t increases. The increase in the rms $|\vec{u}|$ is then computable.

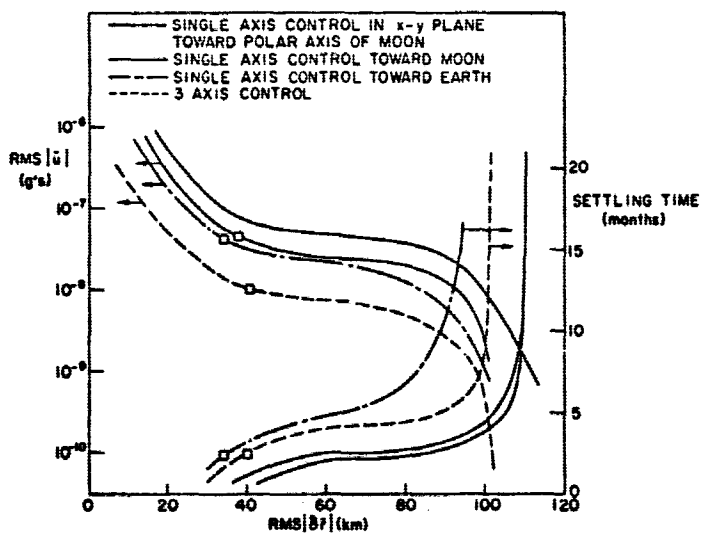


FIG. 2 CONTROL COST VS. SETTTLING TIME.

In the case of range measurements from Earth, the information matrix $H^T(t)H(t)$, averaged over a day, is essentially constant, with information perpendicular to the Earth-Moon direction provided by simultaneous measurement from stations with different latitude and longitude. In the case of range-rate measurements, the Earth's rotation provides significant [3] but generally different NS and EW position information. The inclination, however, of the Moon's orbit to the equator spoils the periodicity of the information relative to the Halo orbit, which has a period of about two weeks not exactly commensurable with the Moon's orbital motion. A roughly comparable, but strictly periodic, information pattern is obtained if the inclination of the Moon's orbit is taken as zero. Assuming a random control execution error with rms value 10^{-9} g's and a correlation time of one day, as well as typical range and range-rate measurement errors, the increase in the rms $|\vec{u}|$ was not significant, even when reliance was placed entirely on range-rate measurement.

A comprehensive account of this work was written by M. Ratner as a Ph.D. dissertation [4].

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